

The Bachelor's Hall.
Look at them well,
See how they swell,
Handsome and homely, but little and small,
Loudly they talk,
Fondly they walk—
See the old boys at the bachelors' hall!
Men without wives,
Graciously what lives
Fellows must lead with no judgment to cheer!
Bachelors' hall,
Conspicuously there,
Homely and childless, their lot must be drear!
No baby's smile,
Their hearts begin to
For to such favors their feelings are cold;
Though they seem gay,
Wretched are they—
Who will take care of them when they are old?
Leap-year is here,
Have they no fear
That with a maid will come and propose
To marry them?
Who says she's afraid
To capture and subjugate one of these bachelors?
There is no hope,
Give them the good-bye
Sooner or later they'll look the wall.
Vainly they'll prance,
Fiddle and dance,
The bald-headed boys at the bachelors' hall!

THE LONG PACK.
High up among the hills, on the
wagon road that runs through the
Cascadia pass, is a small town, much
frequented by commercial travelers,
and which bears the odd title of "The
Long Pack."

"Does that mean a long pack of
cards?" inquired a traveler, glancing
at the swinging signboard, which also
represented the weather-worn picture
of something faintly resembling a
soldier's overgrown knapsack.
"No," replied the gray-haired land-
lord. "It means a peddler's pack.
Nowadays they call them sample
cases, I believe, pointing to the bag-
gage of several commercial drummers
that stood in a corner. "You see I
have a good deal of that sort of custom.
I try to make the 'road boys' as
comfortable as possible, for I was a
little too hard on their fraternity
once."

"How was that?"
"Well," said the mountain Boniface,
who had waited until his daughter, a
buxom matron, had left the room, "it
ain't a very pleasant story, but I like
to tell it sometimes, just to remind
myself that the worst thing a man
can have in this world is a hot, ob-
stinate temper. You see, I came to
this coast soon after the gold fever
broke out, and settled down in the
Santa Barbara valley, below here,
ranching. I was a widower even then,
and had brought with me from the
states my only child—a daughter, past
seventeen. She was a pretty girl, if I
do say it, and being as good as pretty,
you can imagine I was quite wrapped
up in her. Of course, I was anxious to
keep her with me, and if not that, at
least I looked for her to do something
better than fall in love with a peddler."

"And did she?"
"Yes; you see, in those days, the
country was full of young fellows who
had struck out for themselves, and
were trying to get a start by carrying
knick-knacks around from one mining
camp to another. Some of them were
lively chaps enough and well educated,
but I was fresh from the states with
all the eastern prejudices, and it al-
most drove me wild when Nellie told
me she wanted to marry a young fel-
low who brought his pack through our
district a good deal oftener than the
trade seemed to require. I was a
hot-tempered fool in those days, so I
stormed, threatened, locked Nellie up
for a week, and sent word to her lover
that I had loaded my gun for wild cats
and peddlers."

"What did Nellie do?"
"You might have guessed it, stran-
ger. One day when I came back from a
cattle sale she was missing. I chased
her a couple of days, but they had
taken to the tall timber and it was no
use. After a while I got a letter from
"Frisco, and I wrote back saying that I
disowned her, and that he had better
keep out of the range of my dear
rifle."

"What did you do then?"
"Suffered, mister—just suffered. I
knew I was wrong, but I'd have died
rather than give in. For four years I
lived like a toad in a rock, hating the
whole world. All the pleasure I had
was watching for peddlers. The num-
ber I chased off the ranch during that
time would astonish you. One
evening, after a terrible rainstorm, one
of the tribe came to my house and
asked for shelter for the night. He
was a thin, weak looking fellow, with
his face covered by a huge ragged
beard. He carried on his back an
enormously long and heavy pack, and
seemed so exhausted with his tramp
through the mire that I hadn't the
heart to do more than order him off
the place."

"That was pretty hard," said the
listener.
"I suppose it was. The peddler
seemed all broke up when he found I
wouldn't even give him a bunch of
straw in the stable, and no other house
within twelve miles. Instead of com-
plaining, however, he merely begged
that I would let him leave his pack,
which he said contained goods of
value, under shelter from the rain.
I finally consented to this. So, as I
had sworn one of his trade should
never cross my threshold, I carried
his pack inside, while its owner
limped off to crawl under some bush
or other."

"Didn't you feel mean?"
"Yes; mean and bitter at the same
time, for something about the man
reminded me of Nellie's husband a
little. However, I locked and barred
all the doors and windows, as usual,

for some road agents had been around
those parts about that time, and had
stolen up and robbed several ranchers;
and, as I told you, I was all alone.
Somehow I couldn't go to sleep when,
after that, I went to bed. After toss-
ing around for awhile, I got up and
sat by the fire, brooding over my
trouble, and trying not to think of the
poor devil shivering out there in the
cold and rain somewhere. I looked
at his pack sitting up in the corner,
and wondered what made it so long.
As I watched it I fancied I saw it
move."

"Saw it move?"
"Exactly. I wouldn't believe my
eyes at first, but after watching intently
for a while, I distinctly saw the
front of a hand pressed against the
canvas from the inside. Like a flash
then I understood the whole thing.
The peddler was one of the road
agents' gang, and, knowing I had con-
siderable money about the house, they
had adopted that plan for smuggling
one of their crew inside the house.
After I had gone to sleep, the fellow
inside could let in the rest and finish
the job. I walked quietly across the
room, took my gun from the mantel,
kneeling down a few feet from the pack,
aimed at the hand in the corner and pulled
the trigger."

"Go on," murmured the listener,
with a shudder.
"But the gun didn't go off," contin-
ued the landlord, clearing his throat.
"The nippie was rusty and wouldn't
work, so I laid down the rifle and got
an ax from the kitchen. It had been
newly ground that day, and when I
lifted it over my head, I counted upon
cleaving that pack, robber and all,
clear to the floor. Just as I raised the
ax and braced myself for the blow, I
saw a ghost."

"A ghost?"
"Yes, sir. The pack opened, and I
saw sticking out of its top the curly
yellow head, blue eyes and rosy cheeks
of my Nellie when she was a little bit
of four. The shock staggered me so
that I sank on my knees. I wiped my
eyes, and wondered if I had gone
crazy. I was almost certain of it, when
the ghost stretched out a pair of child-
by white arms, and said:

"Deevinn, drandpa!"
"Ah!" said the guest, with a relieved
sigh, "I begin to see. And what did
you do then?"
"I don't exactly know," said the
landlord, softly, "but if there is any-
thing that will bend a stiff, stubborn
neck quicker than the arms of a little
child, I'd like to know what it is. I
put the tired little prisoner down by
the fire, opened the door and held out
my arms."

"And the mother—"
"Yes," nodded the landlord, "they
were both there; and, mister, I guess
that's the end of my story," and the
old man wiped his eyes. "You must
excuse me, stranger, but that was a
wet evening, and somehow I haven't
got quite dry since."

Rupert's Love.
"Oh, darling, must I leave thee
now?"

As these words fell like molten drops
of lead, a look of deep pain flashed
across Rupert Melville's Chicago com-
tenance.

"Oh, Rupert, and must you leave me?"
passionately queried the lovely thirty-
five-year-old, laying her blushing
face on his coat sleeve, and leaving
signs that would leave people to think
that she had been back and had fallen
into a lime barrel.

"Indeed I must, dearest," he fondly
answered, bracing himself against the
mantelpiece for the final plunge,
while his loving eyes counted the
freckles on her nose. "I must be
from here, sweet one, and seek some
foreign port, where, unknown to all, I
may begin a new life."

As the manly fellow spoke these
words, his form shook from the weight
of woe and that of his loving com-
panion.

"Where do you think of going?"
she asked, childishly toying with his
grass watch chain.

"I had thought of Griffin," he re-
sponded.

"Why do you leave our fair city for
Griffin?" she demanded, a jealous
look flashing from her eyes.

"Because," he faltered, "because—
oh, darling, can you stand it?"
"I can and will," she answered firmly.

Then, with a demoniac glare light-
ing up his long cut features, Rupert
Melville hissed:

"Because the saloons have quit
making nickel plates of ice cream."

Thought No, Too.
In response to a sign of "Boy Want-
ed," a lad about twelve years of age
applied for a position in a Michigan
avenue store. The proprietor liked
his looks and decided to take him, and
after some general explanations and
observations, asked:

"What is your first name?"
"Henry."

"Very well; I shall call you by
that."

"What is your first name?" asked
the boy.

"Oh, I think it's altogether the best
plan to call each other by our first
names. It saves time, and you don't
get folks mixed up. You can call me
Hank, and if your name's William I
can shorten it half a rod."

Legal Advice.
Two Dutchmen, who built and used
in common a small bridge over a
stream which ran through their farms,
had a dispute concerning some re-
pairs which it needed, and one of
them positively refused to bear any of
the expense necessary to purchase a
few planks.

Finally the aggrieved party went to
a neighboring lawyer, and placing
ten dollars in his hand, said:

"I'll give you all dish moneys if
you'll make Hans do justice mit de
pridge."

"How much will it cost to repair it?"
asked the honest lawyer.

"Not more ash five tollar," replied
the Dutchman.

"Very well," replied the lawyer,
pocketing one of the notes and giving
him the other. "Take this and go get
the bridge repaired, tie the best course
you can take."

"Yaas," said the Dutchman, slowly,
"yaas, dat ish more better as to bet-
ter mit Hans. But as he went along
home he shook his head frequently, as
if unable, after all, see to quite clearly
how he had gained anything by going
to law."

Rules of the Wash House.

"Say, you yellow-skinned Chinee, I
left two flannel shirts and a pair of
overalls here to be washed to'other day,
an' when I saw my boy around to
get 'em and tell yer I'd lost the check-
yer said 'no checky no washy' to 'em."

"No checky, no washy. Dat ash
for life, me no yellow-skin. Me Chinee
no life. Me lun washee hou ee."

"No checky, no washy?"
"Then I'll smash your mug all over
your face," and the irate patron of
Tung Lung began to work his arms.

A moment later he was so mixed up
with a Chinaman that he could hard-
ly tell which was which. He got an
awful thrashing, and when he came
out of that laundry with glasses partly
broken off, and with his nose bash-
fully retiring from view with face,
with one eye hanging down on his
check and the other closed for repairs,
he mournfully said to a man who asked
him what ailed him:

"Ther rule 'o' that wash house ash
'No checky, no washy,' an' I had
gunned if they don't enforce it."

Without Argument.

He was a young lawyer, and was de-
livering his maiden speech. Like
most young lawyers, he was florid,
rhetorical, scattering and weary. For
four weary hours he talked at the
court and the jury, until everything
felt like lynching him. When he got
through, his opponent, a grizzled old
professional, arose, looked sweetly at
the judge, and said:

"Your honor, I will follow the ex-
ample of my young friend, who has
just finished, and submit the case
without argument."

Then he sat down, and the silence
was large and oppressive.

A Keen Reminder.

"There isn't a button on this shirt,"
dispassionately observed the young husband,
shaking the garment before his wife's
eyes.

"I'm sorry, my love; it might have
been remended if I had had the time."

"Why, you have got nothing to do.
What do you mean by saying all you
had time?"

"I mean that if there had been no
occasion for me to trim over a last
spring before for this spring's wear, I
would have had time to look after your
clothes."

"Now, my dear," said the candi-
date's wife, "I don't wish to throw
the slightest obstacle in the way of
your election, and if you choose to
turn the house into a beer-garden, and
have all the loafers in town tramping
on my carpets and filling my curtains
with pipe smoke and drinking whisky
out of my best ten-cups, I shan't
say a word. But I want you to under-
stand that if another of those women's
rights delegations comes to know if
you are going to take a manly stand
for down-trodden womanhood—well,
that delegation has got to be twenty
years older and keep its vall down, or
I'll interview it myself. That's all,
dear."

It requires nerve to edit a newspaper
out West, as the experience of one of
them fellows, who told his friend all
show:

"One evening, it was moonlight, in
the summer time—we sat alone on the
porch by the cottage door, holding
that little white hand in a gentle pres-
sure; one arm had stolen round her
waist and a silent song of joy, like the
music of the night, was on our lips.
Our lips met in a sweet delicious kiss,
and bending softly to her ear, we
whispered a tale of passionate devo-
tion—we proposed. In a moment she
tore her hand from ours, and with a
look of ineffable scorn, said, 'What!
marry an editor? You git out!' We
slid."

"La me!" sighed Mrs. Partington,
"here I have been suffering the big-
gies of death for three mortal weeks.
First I was seized with a bleeding
phenomenon in the left hemisphere of
the brain, which was excused by a
stoppage of the left ventilator of the
heart. This gave me an inflammation
in the bowels, and now I'm sick
with the chloroform morbid. There's
no blessing like that of death, particu-
larly when you're ill."

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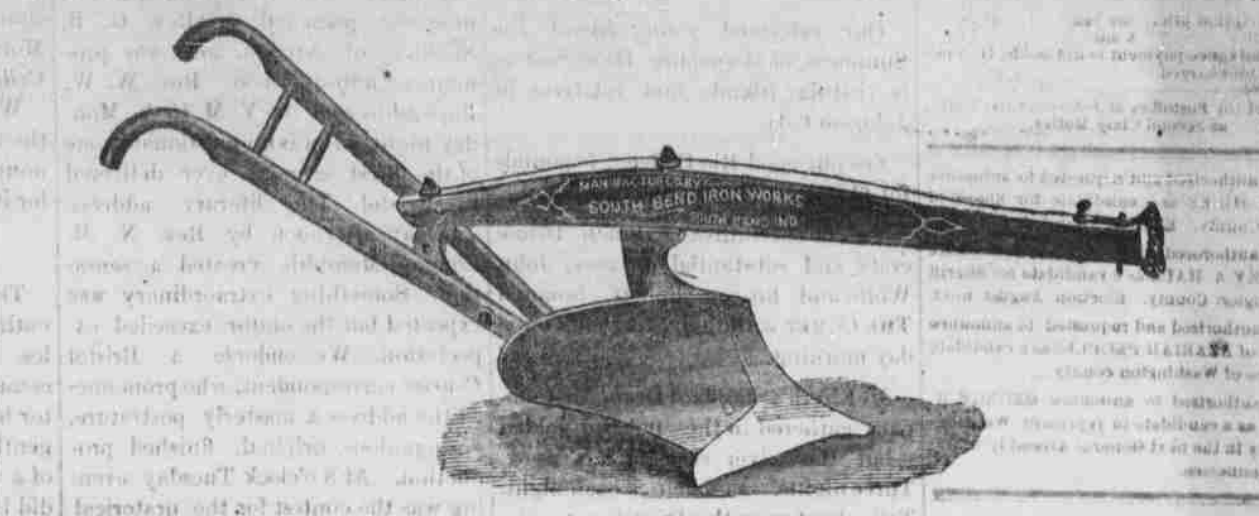
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